

The Present Truth, vol. 7

ESTR

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
1891	3
February 26, 1891	3
"Is It Peace and Safety?" The Present Truth 7, 5, pp. 75, 76.	3
April 9, 1891	8
"The Religious Oath" The Present Truth 7, 8, p. 124.	8
June 18, 1891	10
"Human Nature and Its Restraints" The Present Truth 7, 13, pp. 203, 204.	10
July 16, 1891	14
"Reputation" The Present Truth 7, 15, p. 228.	14
August 13, 1891	15
"The Reward of the Saints" The Present Truth 7, 17, pp. 266, 267.	15
September 10, 1891	19
"The Church the House of God" The Present Truth 7, 19, pp. 298, 299.	19
October 22, 1891	23
"Written for Our Learning" The Present Truth 7, 22, p. 346.	23

1891

February 26, 1891

“Is It Peace and Safety?” The Present Truth 7, 5, pp. 75, 76.

ATJ

IN spite of the rapid increase of crime and violence on every hand; in spite of the most gigantic preparations for war that the world has ever seen; in spite of the increasing worldliness of the church, the pulpit and the religious press continue to talk of peace and safety, of a millennium in which there shall be no war, and in which the world will be converted. In the midst of violence and crime, it seems a strange proceeding to talk of peace and safety. In the presence of the greatest possible preparations for war, it seems rather incongruous to announce the speedy approach of a time when there shall be no war. In the face of the increasing worldliness of the church, and the loss of her power of godliness, the prospect does not appear very flattering for the conversion of the world to Christ. Yet under these very circumstances, in these very times, these very things are preached.*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.1*

But is such preaching, the preaching of the truth? Is it so that through the practice of violence and crime there is to be developed an era of peace and safety for those safety for those who commit these things as well as for those who do not? Is it true that by these immense preparations for war, by this constant readiness for war, and this increasing jealousy and warlike spirit amongst nations, there is to be brought about a time when all nations shall voluntarily lay down their arms and make no more preparation for war, and when there shall nevermore be either jealousy or warlike spirit? Is it a fact that through a world-loving church seeking for worldly power and worldly favor, there shall flow such a flood of Divine grace that it shall irresistibly overwhelm the world? Such results from such causes or by such means, are moral impossibilities. Then why is it that from one end of Christendom to the other the pulpits ring with it? Is it because the Scriptures say that this shall be? Let us

see.*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.2*

There are certain scriptures quoted to prove that these things are so. Let us read them.*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.3*

Psalms 2:7, 8. "I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." There, does not that say that the world shall be converted? Well does it? Plainly it does not. It says that the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth shall be given to the Son of God. But it does not say that this shall be by conversion nor for conversion. Before the conversion of the heathen or the uttermost parts of the earth can be found in that scripture it has to be put into it by the one who wants to find it there. And that is not the best way to interpret Scripture. It is not the best way to read into Scripture what we want there, rather than to read the Scripture to find what really is there. But it may be asked, Is not conversion the necessary conclusion from the text? It is not, because the next verse shows the contrary: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." That is certainly anything else then their conversion. This is shown further by the remaining verses: "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little."*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.4*

This shows that the time is coming when the Son will be angry, and His wrath will be kindled; and that now men must make their peace with Him, that they be not broken and dashed in pieces when His wrath shall be kindled, for that is to be done with the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth when they are given to Him. This is confirmed by another scripture in which this wrath is spoken of. *Revelation 6:16* speaks of "the wrath of the Lamb." And when that wrath is revealed, "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the

throne, and *from the wrath* of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" It is certain therefore that the second psalm does not teach the conversion of the world; nor will it allow any such teaching to be read into it.*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.5*

Another scripture quoted in proof of the conversion of the world is *Revelation 11:15*: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." But this text is much the same as the other. It does not say that these kingdoms become His by conversion nor for conversion. It is evident that this text bears the same meaning as that in the second psalm. Read the two together: "I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." These two texts certainly speak of the same time and the same event, and we have seen that these heathen are given Him to be dashed in pieces. And that this is the same with "the kingdoms of the world," is evident from the context. The whole verse reads, "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.6*

"The seventh angel" here spoken of is the seventh of the seven trumpet angels of the eighth to the eleventh chapters of this book. And each of the last three trumpets is accompanied by woe, for *Revelation 8:13* says, "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!" There were three trumpets yet to sound and there were to be three woes because of the three trumpets. This is further shown by *Revelation 11:14*: "The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly." Then follows the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the announcement that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ. Now as the seventh trumpet is accompanied by the third woe, and as it is under the seventh trumpet that the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, it is certain therefore that it is in the midst of a time of woe that the

kingdoms of this world do become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.7*

This is further shown by *verse 18*: “And the nations were angry (precisely the attitude of the nations at this moment), and *Thy wrath is come*, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which corrupt (margin) the earth.” The time of reward of the saints, etc., is at the coming of the Lord, for He says, “Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” *Revelation 22:12*. Then it is that His wrath is kindled, and the angry nations are given Him, and in the midst of a time of woe they are dashed in pieces and destroyed because they corrupt the earth.*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 75.8*

This is confirmed by the prophecy in *Daniel 2:31-45*. There was a great image seen, with head of gold, breast and arms of silver, sides of brass, legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay. Then a stone was seen to smite the image upon his feet, “and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.” And in explanation of this the Word says: “In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall *break in pieces and consume* all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”*PTUK February 26, 1891, page 76.1*

It is evident that in none of these texts is the conversion of the world, nor a millennium of peace, spoken of at all nor even suggested. Instead of the nations being at peace, they are “angry;” instead of there being safety on the earth there is “woe;” instead of the conversion of the world there is to be destruction that shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. And yet in the face of these plain declarations of the Word of God, and of the events that mark their fulfilment, men will preach directly the opposite. But even this is shown by the Word of God as that which will be at this time. In the last verse of *1 Thessalonians 4*, the coming of the Lord is

spoken of. Then in the first verses of the fifth chapter it is said: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; *then sudden destruction cometh upon them*, as travail upon a woman with child; *and they shall not escape.*"PTUK February 26, 1891, page 76.2

This shows that at the time when destruction is impending there will be men saying, "Peace and safety," and *then* sudden destruction comes upon them. Therefore if there is any one thing that men should disbelieve, it is the preaching of peace and safety, the preaching of a millennium of peace and the conversion of the world. The very preaching of it is evidence of its falsity, because the word of God says that *then* "destruction cometh."PTUK February 26, 1891, page 76.3

A. T. J.

April 9, 1891

“The Religious Oath” The Present Truth 7, 8, p. 124.

ATJ

A SHORT time ago, in noticing the Nine Demands for Liberalism, we made some remarks upon the religious oath; and now comes the *Christian Statesman* and confirms all that we then said on that question. It says:—*PTUK April 9, 1891, page 124.1*

The efficacy of the oath which is simply an appeal to God, as witness and Judge, depends on the fear of God in the hearts of men.*PTUK April 9, 1891, page 124.2*

This is true. What is the worth, therefore, of such an oath taken by men who have no fear of God in their hearts? To oblige a man who has no fear of God in his heart, to take an oath, the sole efficacy of which depends on the fear of God in his heart, in order that he may be a competent witness, is to destroy all the value of his testimony. Because when such a man takes such an oath, he publicly professes that he has the fear of God in his heart, when he and all who are acquainted with him know full well that it is not so. He therefore publicly professes a lie as a pledge to society that he is going to tell the truth! And any State which compels men to take such an oath in order to be competent witnesses, adopts the surest means of undermining both public and private integrity, and of destroying the value of judicial testimony.*PTUK April 9, 1891, page 124.3*

The *Statesman* knows of course that there is not as much of the fear of God in the hearts of men in the United States as there should be to lend the religious oath its necessary efficacy; and therefore it proposes in the regular National Reform way, to put the fear of God in the hearts of all of the people in Pennsylvania by strictly enforcing the Pennsylvanian statute, which declares that*PTUK April 9, 1891, page 124.4*

If any person shall willfully, premeditatedly and despitefully blaspheme, or speak loosely or profanely of Almighty God, Christ

Jesus, the Holy Spirit, or the Scriptures of truth, such person shall be liable to a fine of one hundred dollars, and an imprisonment of three months.*PTUK April 9, 1891, page 124.5*

The *Statesman* therefore declares that “a crusade against profanity would be an incalculable blessing;” and calls upon the “religious newspapers” to summon “Christian citizens to undertake it.” Now we are not in favour of either blasphemy or profanity; but at the same time we are not in favour of any effort to put the fear of God into the hearts of men by penalties upon their bodies and goods. The fact of the matter is, that State laws on the subject of blasphemy are themselves blasphemous.*PTUK April 9, 1891, page 124.6*

A. T. JONES.

June 18, 1891

“Human Nature and Its Restraints” The Present Truth 7, 13, pp. 203, 204.

ATJ

LET anyone compare the two pictures drawn by Paul, the one in *Romans 1:28-31*, of the iniquity of ancient heathenism, the other in *2 Timothy 3:1-8*, of the iniquity of the last days, even among those who have “a form of godliness,” and he will see that they are exactly alike. Human nature, unrestrained, is the same in all ages. Whether in the days of Christ, or two thousand years before, or two thousand years after; whether manifested in the habitants of Canaan, or in the inhabitants of the United States, it is always the same. It is for this very reason that the Bible fits men, wherever on the earth it may find them. It is a book not for one tribe only, nor for one class, nor for one nation, but for the human race. *And it is the only book in the world that is.* The reason for that is, that the book was given by One who knows human nature in its very essence.*PTUK June 18, 1891, page 203.1*

God made man upright. But he turned from the bright course which God set before him; he sinned, and so sold himself to do evil; and not the sublime powers which the Lord bestowed upon him, to be exerted in the way of righteousness, are prostituted to evil; his “course is evil,” and his “force is not right.” If ever, then, man shall be raised from his fallen state, if ever his lapsed powers shall be restored, it is indispensable that the tendency of every faculty be restrained, turned into the right course, and trained to follow it. The Bible meets this necessity; it meets it in every part, and satisfies it to the full. Therefore, this of itself is proof that *the Creator of man is the Aauthor of the Bible.**PTUK June 18, 1891, page 203.2*

Human nature being the same everywhere, the only thing that makes one person to differ from another *is the degree of restraint* each one recognizes in his own case. If, in a person, all the restraints of the law of God are recognized, he will be a man fitted for the society and fellowship of the angels. If, on the contrary, none of these are recognized, he will be a man fit only for the society and fellowship of demons. Upon many persons, and in many ways,

these restraints exert themselves unconsciously, as in the case of the infidel, who denies the authority or the existence of God, and despises his word. Yet the principles of that word are so imbedded in the society of which he is a member that he yields obedience to them, while he thinks he is defying them; but transplant him to the state of society which he advocates, where none of these principles are recognized, and none exerted, and he will run as readily in the way of iniquity as the veriest heathen that ever dwelt in the land of Canaan. And that other class of persons who call themselves “Christians”, or even “Christian ministers,” who, in their opposition to the obligations of the ten commandments, can hardly frame sentences that will sufficiently express the bitterness of their contempt for the law of God, only let the time come when such seed shall have borne its fruit, when society in following such teaching shall have reached that condition which would be defined in the very opposite of the ten commandments, and they will go as greedily in that evil way as did Balaam of old.*PTUK June 18, 1891, page 203.3*

Again, many will restrain themselves from *doing* evil through fear of punishment; but take away the prospect of punishment, or satisfy them that there will be none, and they will go to any length that circumstances may allow. Henry VIII., although he regarded not God, as long as he feared the Pope did not dare to divorce his wife, but when he had broken through that restraint, he *cut off the heads of three wives*, and only a witty speech saved the head of the fourth.*PTUK June 18, 1891, page 203.4*

There is another course by which men reach the same state of cruelty. That is, not by denying the existence of God, but by making themselves the depositaries of what they choose to define as his will, and then holding themselves as the sole expositors and executors of that will. As in every single instance it is only *their own will* which is thus exalted to the supremacy, and therefore is of only human authority, the only way in which it can be enforced is by human enactment; and then instead of being simply executors, they make themselves *executioners* in carrying into effect their arbitrary will. Making their own will supreme, and themselves the sole interpreters of that will, even though they claim it to be the will of God, they just as veritably put themselves beyond restraint as do

the men who deny God outright. Both classes reach the same point, and both commit the same enormous crimes, the one illustrated in the fearful orgies of the Reign of Terror, the other illustrated in the terrible torments of the Inquisition.*PTUK June 18, 1891, page 203.5*

The Scriptures confirm all that this investigation suggests. In the beginning of this article we cited *Romans 1:28-31* as the description of the ancient heathendom, and *2 Timothy 3:1-8* as the description of the last days of modern Christendom, and we find them exactly alike. It is by resistance to the truth of God that men loosen its restraints upon them, and deliver themselves up to the sway of Satan. In the last days it is only those who “received not the *love of the truth* that they might be saved,” in whom Satan works “with all power and signs and lying wonders.” It is only those “who believe not the truth” but have “pleasure in unrighteousness,” who become so deluded that they “believe a lie.”*PTUK June 18, 1891, page 203.6*

From the beginning of the world God has left no nation without witness. *Acts 14:16, 17*. By a then “present truth” He has witnessed to different ages. In obedience to that truth, and in the love of it, lay the salvation of the people in each respective age. In the last days God sends a message which continues sounding to the end of the world, and is therefore His last message to the world. It is the Third Angel’s Message, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” *Revelation 14:9-16*. The commandments of God are truth. *Psalms 119:151*. The faith of Jesus is the faith of Him who is the truth. *John 14:6*. Both together embrace the whole Word of God, which is truth (*John 17:17*), and restrain men. “*Thou shalt not*” is the key-note of the commandments of God; “and if any man will come after Me, *let him deny himself*,” exclaims Jesus. Therefore the Third Angel’s Message, in holding forth the “commandments of god and the faith of Jesus” presents the summary of all those restraints which are demanded in checking and transforming the tendencies of human nature, and in leading them by the “right course,” to goodness and to God. And when the word shall deliberately reject the Third Angel’s Message, it thereby places itself beyond those restraints, and is then ready to be led captive by Satan *at his will*; and then it is that he works with all power in them that perish, “*because they received not the love of*

the truth that they might be saved.” By the Third Angel’s Message, the harvest of the earth will be ripened for good or for ill; for glory or for shame; to be gathered into the garner of God, or to be bound in bundles to be burned.*PTUK June 18, 1891, page 204.1*

A. T. J.

July 16, 1891

“Reputation” The Present Truth 7, 15, p. 228.

ATJ

IT is character alone that is acceptable to God. No brilliancy of reputation can dazzle Him. He demands truth in the inward parts. “God looketh on the heart.” And here people make a great mistake as often as in anything else. Thousands when called upon to obey the truth of God, will put first their reputation, and what they think is their influence, and will make their allegiance to God—their character—yield to these. Christ “made Himself of no reputation;” so likewise did he who was the figure of Christ, he “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.” So it will ever be. The disciple is not greater than his Lord.*PTUK July 16, 1891, page 228.1*

The people of God have ever been subject to reproach; the truth of God has always been unpopular, and men often have the opportunity to follow Christ most closely by, like Him, making themselves of “no reputation.” Often it becomes necessary for us to forfeit reputation before men, that we may perfect character before God.*PTUK July 16, 1891, page 228.2*

A. T. J.

August 13, 1891

“The Reward of the Saints” *The Present Truth* 7, 17, pp. 266, 267.

ATJ

THE last question which we shall notice in this connection is that one which was put by Peter to the Lord Jesus: “Behold, we have forsake all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?” To this question the Lord gave two answers. The first one was to the twelve direct, and concerned them alone: “Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” The other answer is to all people: “And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold,” “now in this time, ... and in the world to come eternal life.” *Matthew 19:27-29; Mark 10:30.PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.1*

Eternal life is that which they shall have who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. “For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” *John 3:16*. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” *1 John 5:11, 12.PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.2*

With eternal life to those who believe on the Son of God, there is also given eternal glory. “The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” *1 Peter 5:10*. “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” *Romans 8:18*. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” *2 Corinthians 4:17.PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.3*

They shall stand in the presence of the throne of God and of His glory. “I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could

number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” *Revelation 7:9, 10*. “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.” *Jude 24, 25*. *PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.4*

Of some other of the glories of the reward which shall be to those who have left all and followed Christ, we will let another tell, in tones that charm as though attuned to the symphonies of the other world: —*PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.5*

“‘And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.’ The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. One reminder alone remains: our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought.” *PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.6*

“‘O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion.’ The kingdom forfeited by sin, Christ has regained, and the redeemed are to possess it with Him. ‘The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.’ A fear of making the saints’ inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon the new earth as our home. Christ assured His disciples that He went to prepare mansions for them. Those who accept the teachings of God’s Word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode. And yet the apostle Paul declares: ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.’ Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the paradise of God.” *PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.7*

"In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called a country. There the great Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God's people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home." *PTUK August 13, 1891, page 266.8*

"There is the New Jerusalem, 'having the glory of God,' her light 'like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.' Saith the Lord: 'I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people.' 'The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.' *PTUK August 13, 1891, page 267.1*

"In the city of God 'there shall be no night.' None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning, and shall ever be far from its close. 'And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.' The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the holy city with unfailing light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day. *PTUK August 13, 1891, page 267.2*

"'I saw no temple therein; For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.' The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. Now we 'see through a glass, darkly.' We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in His presence, and gaze upon the glory of His countenance. *PTUK August 13, 1891, page 267.3*

“There, immortal minds will study with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There is no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body.*PTUK August 13, 1891, page 267.4*

“And as the years of eternity roll, they will bring richer and more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed beat with a stronger devotion, and they sweep the harps of gold with a firmer hand; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.*PTUK August 13, 1891, page 267.5*

““And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea. and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” A. T. J*PTUK August 13, 1891, page 267.6*

September 10, 1891

“The Church the House of God” The Present Truth 7, 19, pp. 298, 299.

ATJ

IN one of the views which the Scripture gives of the Church of Christ it is called “the house of God.” Said Paul to Timothy: “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” *1 Timothy 3:14, 15*. And again, in the letter to the Hebrews, we read: “And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over His own house; *whose house are we*, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” *Hebrews 3:5, 6*. Peter also adopts the same figure, and, speaking of the Lord, says, “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.” *1 Peter 5:4, 5*. *PTUK September 10, 1891, page 298.1*

Christ is the “living Stone,” and they who believe on Him become “lively” stones because they live by Him who is life; for it is written: “Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.” These persons therefore who by believing on the living Stone become lively, or living, stones, are built up a spiritual house, and this house is the church of the living God. Paul further speaks of it as God’s *building*. Speaking of himself and Apollos as ministers by whom the brethren had believed on Christ, he says: “For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.” *1 Corinthians 3:9*. That is to say, By their labours in preaching the gospel of Christ, these brethren had been brought to believe on Christ, the living Stone, and, by believing on Him, had become imbued with life from Him, and had thus become in the figure living stones. These then built up that spiritual house, became God’s building. Now Paul carries the thought further: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation,

and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” *1 Corinthians 3:10, 11.PTUK September 10, 1891, page 298.2*

Christ is the foundation and chief corner-stone, the very foundation of the foundation, and in the letter to the Ephesians, Paul carries the thought yet further and completes this conception of the church as the house or building of God. Of Christ he says: “Through Him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye [Gentiles] are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” *Ephesians 2:18-22.PTUK September 10, 1891, page 298.3*

Here, then, is the Lord’s view of the church as the house or building of God: Christ, and the apostles and prophets are the foundation, and the membership at large is the superstructure. But Christ Himself is the chief corner-stone, the foundation of the whole structure, the foundation of the foundation itself. Because it is only in Christ that either the apostles or prophets were ever what they were, or that any member is what he is. Christ is the living Stone, to whom the apostles and prophets and all others must come that they might be made lively stones, fit for the building of God. In Jesus Christ, and upon Jesus Christ, the church of Christ, the church of the living God, is built. And the purpose of this building is “for an habitation [a dwelling place] of God through the Spirit.” “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you,” and “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” *Romans 8:9*. And said Jesus, “If a man love Me, He will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.” *John 14:23*. Thus it is, and of these “God hath said, I will dwell in them; and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” *2 Corinthians 6:16*. As He saith also in another place, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” *1 Corinthians 3:16*.

“For ye are the temple of the living God.” When these in whom the Spirit of God dwells are “fitly framed together,” and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ, they grow unto an holy temple, in the Lord, and are “an habitation of God through the Spirit.” And that is the house of God, the church of the living God.*PTUK September 10, 1891, page 298.4*

Peter said, as before quoted, “To whom coming as unto a living stone, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house.” Now it is a characteristic of a living stone that it can be polished to such a height that it will reflect the image of the one looking upon it. Thus Christ is the living stone, to whom we come, and upon whom we look, and to whom we come, and upon whom we look, and as we look we see ourselves. And there “we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, *are changed into the same image* from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” *2 Corinthians 3:18*. And thus, being changed into the same image, we also become lively stones, reflecting in turn the image of Christ as He looks upon us; for then God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. *2 Corinthians 4:6*. Then the church is indeed the light of the world, a city set on a hill which cannot be hid. It is written of the city of God, the New Jerusalem, that it has twelve foundations “garnished with all manner of precious stones.” The first foundation is jasper, clear as crystal; the second, a sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, a sardonyx; the sixth, a sardius; the seventh, a chrysolite; the eighth, a beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst; and are surmounted by a wall great and high, “and the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.” And the glory of God does lighten the city, and the Lamb is the light thereof; and her light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. *Revelation 21:10-23*. Eye has never seen except in holy vision such a scene of glory and beauty as is here pictured of the city of the living God, and the home of the redeemed.*PTUK September 10, 1891, page 298.5*

Now the New Jerusalem is not the church. It *is not* the house, the

building, the habitation, the church, of God, referred to in the texts which we have quoted in this article. But from this description of the glorious city of God, we may gather from this image of the church as a house, a building, and an habitation of God, an idea of what the Lord desires that the glorious church of God shall be. Christ is a living stone, the chief corner-stone, most precious. He is the first, the chief foundation of the church. Upon Him as part of the foundation also, rest the apostles and prophets, made from Him lively stones. Then upon this foundation are built all the saints, as gold, silver, and precious stones. *1 Corinthians 3:12*. Then the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, shining through and reflected from all these, makes the church indeed the light of the world, giving to men the knowledge of the glory of God as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. Oh, that each one who professes to be a member of the church of Christ were really so! Oh, that everyone who is professedly joined to the church, were really joined to Christ! that each one were indeed a lively stone reflecting the precious image of the dear Redeemer, and thus conveying to them that are in darkness the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as it is manifested in Jesus Christ our Lord. Then indeed would the world believe that God did send Jesus Christ.*PTUK September 10, 1891, page 299.1*

A. T. J.

October 22, 1891

“Written for Our Learning” The Present Truth 7, 22, p. 346.

ATJ

THE apostle says that “whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” We may draw a very useful lesson from the case of the Rechabites, who were commendably tenacious of the commandments of their fathers.*PTUK October 22, 1891, page 346.1*

There is always a disposition in man to do as his ancestors do, without ever inquiring whether it is right or wrong. If among professed Christians there was the readiness to obey strictly what the Word of God commands that there is to be content with barely doing what our fathers did, or what is enjoined by tradition and the precepts of men, it would be only a little while till the earth would be full of the glory of God. God commands that we shall be baptized, but the majority of professed Christians are willing to do almost anything in the world but to render faithful obedience to the Word. The Lord commands that men shall do no work on the seventh day, but the great majority of professed Christians are willing to do anything at all but to obey the plain commandment of God in this matter. In honour of a wholly man-made institution, they are willing to do all that would be required by the Lord in honour of His own heaven-born institution. This choice has been made, and is being made by thousands as the days go by. If there were about this man-made institution the merit of the precept of Jonadab, there might be some shadow of excuse, but about this there is not one redeeming quality; it is wholly iniquitous, erected in defiance of the commandment of God. And the children of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, will arise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it because they obeyed the commandment of their father, and these will not obey the plain commandment of God.*PTUK October 22, 1891, page 346.2*

The Lord has given His commandments, precept upon precept, and line upon line; He now sends a message to all nations, saying with a loud voice: “If any man worship the beast and his image, and

receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation.... Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." *Revelation 14:9-12.PTUK October 22, 1891, page 346.3*

How many of the people of our day are going to be condemned by the faithful Rechabites, as were the people of God? And upon how many in our day will come all the evil that the Lord has pronounced, "because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered"? "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." *PTUK October 22, 1891, page 346.4*

A. T. J.

